

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 7, 2004

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

We are writing to reiterate our offer to work with you to resolve the impasse over Michigan federal court vacancies. The number of Michigan vacancies on the Sixth Circuit presents an unusual opportunity for compromise that we have urged not be allowed to pass.

As you are aware, we have supported two previous compromise offers to resolve the situation, one put forward by Senate Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Senator Patrick Leahy and supported by former Governor John Engler, and the other by us. Unfortunately, both were rejected by the White House.

We urge you to reconsider our proposal to establish a bipartisan commission to address the Michigan vacancies. A bipartisan commission to recommend potential nominees has been effective in Wisconsin and we believe such a commission could also work in Michigan. We emphasize that its mission would be to make bipartisan recommendations and would usurp neither your Constitutional power to nominate nor the Senate's Constitutional authority to advise and consent on those nominations.

We remain willing to discuss any compromise offer that addresses the unfair treatment of the two Michigan women previously nominated by President Clinton to vacancies on the Sixth Circuit so that the tactic used to deny them hearings does not succeed. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch has repeatedly expressed his willingness to work with us to achieve a compromise and we hope that you will join that effort.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow



Carl Levin